Annual Accountability Report for the Fiscal Year 2004-2005

December 2005

Nova Scotia Advisory Council
on the Status of Women
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Accountability Statement

The accountability report of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women for the year ended March 31, 2005 is prepared pursuant to the *Provincial Financial Act*, the *Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act*, 1977, c. 3, s. 6(1) and government policy and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women's business plan information for the fiscal year 2004-2005. The reporting of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women's outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women management.

We acknowledge that this accountability report is the responsibility of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women's management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women's business plan for the year.

Minister

Chair

Messages from the Minister and Chair

Message from the Minister

The Advisory Council and staff continued this year to work with women's groups and others to advance fairness, dignity and equality for women in Nova Scotia. Their advice to government on immigration, insurance reform, and multiculturalism has been informative and useful. Their publications *Votes for Women* and *Happily Ever After* will benefit many women. Their presentation on behalf of Canada at the OECD conference on social indicators in February reflects the level of respect this small organization has earned across our country.

I commend them on their contributions and thank them for their work.

Honourable Carolyn Bolivar-Getson
Minister, Status of Women

Message from the Chair

Council's work with women in all their diversity in Nova Scotia again contributed to achievements in all four goal areas. Every council member appreciates the hard work of staff and the opportunity of contributing to the advancement of equality, fairness and dignity for all women.

I am proud of the work the Council and staff have accomplished and look forward to continue work with the Honourable Carolyn Bolivar-Getson.

Sonja Power,
Chair, Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Introduction

The content of this accountability report is based on the goals, priorities and outcomes described in the Advisory Council's business plan for 2004-2005. The report describes the accomplishments and progress that the Advisory Council has made in meeting those goals and priorities.

The purpose of this report is to update the public, members of the legislative assembly and the Advisory Council's stakeholders, including women's equality seeking groups and all women in the province, on Council's activities.

The report is structured around the agency's functions – policy and research, information and education, and community liaison and rural outreach – and the priorities for each function.

Background

The Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women advises the provincial government on issues of interest and concern to women, and to bring those issues forward. The mandate and powers of the Advisory Council on the Status of Women are set out in Section 4 of the *Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act*, which was first passed in 1977. The mandate is:

- to advise the Minister upon such matters relating to the status of women as are referred to the Council for consideration by the Minister;

- to bring to the attention of the Minister matters of interest and concern to women.

The Council's powers are:

- to receive and hear petitions and suggestions concerning the status of women;
- to undertake and recommend research on matters relevant to the status of women;
- to recommend and participate in programs concerning the status of women;
- to propose legislation, policies and practices to promote equality of opportunity and status;
- to publish reports, studies and recommendations.

The Advisory Council keeps women's issues on the agenda of governments. The Minister responsible for the Status of Women appoints 10 to 12 women to the Advisory Council from all regions of the province. Council members stay in touch with women in their communities, identifying opportunities and needs for government action. Diversity is a hallmark of Council membership and action, as the Council seeks to be inclusive of all women in Nova Scotia. Council staff work on policy research, public education, and community liaison and outreach.

Mission, Goals and Core Functions

Mission

To advance equality, fairness and dignity for all women in Nova Scotia.

Goals

- To increase the participation of women in all their diversity in decisions that affect their lives, families and communities, with particular emphasis on those who face discrimination because of race, age, language, class, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or various forms of family status.
- To promote women's economic equality.
- To reduce violence against women in communities, workplaces and families.
- To improve the health and well-being of women and their families.

Core Functions

Policy and Research
The Council advises the Minister responsible for the Status of Women on the concerns and priorities of women, and formulates strategies and options to address these. The Council conducts quantitative and qualitative research in consultation with community groups and government departments to ensure advice is a feasible, relevant, timely and accurate guide to government action.

Information and Education
The Council collects and disseminates information on women's issues to the Minister, Council, staff, and other key stakeholders, including the media and the general public. Through a comprehensive communications strategy, Council informs and influences key stakeholders about issues and concerns affecting women, Council, and government priorities, activities and accomplishments, as well as about opportunities for improvement in addressing women's issues.

Community Liaison and Rural Outreach
Through Council members and fieldwork staff, the Advisory Council brings forward concerns of women from across Nova Scotia, with particular attention to historically disadvantaged groups. Council also partners with communities, organizations, and agencies to advance equality for women in programs and services.

Progress and Accomplishments
2004-2005

Core Function: Policy and Research
Priority: Research and policy advice to provincial and federal governments

The Executive Director represented Canada at the OECD World Forum on Social Indicators in November, in partnership with Statistics Canada and Status of Women Canada. Her paper on Gender Statistics and Indicators will be published in 2005-2006 as part of the conference proceedings.

A French-language fact sheet on women and economic autonomy in Nova Scotia was completed for Le Sommet des Femmes, 2004 which took place in August. It is available on the Council's website along with the English version.

The Transition to Good Jobs paper was completed and released in July along with a shorter summary document. Further work on this by the Nova Scotia Round Table on Women's Economic Security will depend upon the response to the document, but an opportunity should be found to present the paper to the Employability Committee of the Skills and Learning Framework and to the Skills N.S. Labour Force Planning Committee.

Priority: Inform and influence public policy through statistical analysis and research

Nova Scotia women still strive for economic equality and a better balance of responsibilities at work and at home, and a statistical report released in June helped tell that story in great detail. *Women's Paid and Unpaid Work* is the fifth report in a series of statistical reports on women in Nova Scotia. Women still do the bulk of unpaid caregiving, often on top of paid work outside the home. The report supports council's ongoing work to help low-income women gain work that pays a living wage.

A statistical portrait of Aboriginal women in Nova Scotia was completed for the upcoming F/P/T Ministers meeting in Newfoundland. This fact sheet is a joint collaboration between Status of Women and the N.S. Office of Aboriginal Affairs and will be printed and uploaded to the Council's website after review by various stakeholders.

The Advisory Council is a member of the research committee of Community Action on Homelessness in Halifax. As well, staff acts in an advisory capacity to a project on homelessness in rural areas. This project is funded by Human Resources Skills Development Canada. The issue of homelessness is unique in the coastal and rural communities of southwestern Nova Scotia. Youth, seniors and women are living is unsafe conditions.

The objectives of the project are two-fold:

- to identify the magnitude, the reasons and characteristics of homelessness;
- and to identify existing programs and work already underway within the communities to address homelessness.

The research will include all sectors of the community including First Nations, African Canadians, Acadians, people with physical and mental disabilities, gays and lesbians, women and men. The fieldworker in Digby/Annapolis represents the Advisory Council on the project's Advisory Committee.

Priority: Ensure opportunities to advance the status of women are identified and reflected in policies and programs

A gender-based analysis of the Nova Scotia Strategy on HIV/AIDS was completed this year. Work with the Interdepartmental AIDS Liaison Committee and the Nova Scotia AIDS Coalition to provide support on gender issues continued as required.

The Executive Director joined the Atlantic Metropolis Centre of Excellence gender domain committee. Research conducted will focus on immigrant women.

In partnership with the Gender Domain of Atlantic Metropolis, a major immigration research program based at Saint Mary's University, Council hosted a Round Table on women and immigration. Women immigrants responded to the Framework for Immigration discussion paper launched by the Province at the end of August. The roundtable meeting and recommendations resulted in eight references to women immigrants in the final immigration strategy document.

The Executive Director participated in the Nova Scotia Task Force on Aging, which is preparing a new strategy on aging. The discussion paper was circulated prior to public consultations to be held in a large number of Nova Scotia communities. The results of those consultations will be used to formulate Nova Scotia's strategy on aging.

The Advisory Council has been involved in the development of Nova Scotia's multiculturalism strategy for the past several months and has sought to ensure that gender issues and the intersectional nature of diversity are considered in this initiative.

During Women's History Month 2003, the fieldworker in Digby/Annapolis worked with the Western Area Women's Coalition to hold a musical tribute honoring the life-long contributions of Frances Mills-Clements. About 100 people attended. A Frances Mills-Clements Foundation has been established to provide bursaries to women pursuing post-secondary education. A Foundation Board of Directors has been set up and a website is being developed.

A brief was submitted to the Department of Environment and Labour in response to their request for advice on the treatment of hours of work and overtime in the labour standards of the province.

Council also provided input to the Nova Scotia Insurance Review Board regarding the elimination of gender as a rating factor in automobile insurance, and the situation of voluntary associations in regard to rising general liability and other insurance rates.

Council met with Corrections staff to support a consideration of gender and the particular needs of women as employees in the correctional system; the needs of women as victims; and the needs of women as offenders in a new corrections act.

The Advisory Council worked with Women's FishNet to help disseminate their Good Policy, Good Health project. The current project has been testing the kit for use in groups where there is no formal facilitator. The goal is to make the kit more user friendly and to develop a section on facilitation and how groups can use the kit without a trained facilitator. The project will be completed by September.

Priority: Disseminate results of the Healthy Balance Research Program on paid and unpaid work and caregiving

In the FPT Forum of Status of Women Ministers, this agency shared the lead with PEI in developing a background paper on taxation and dependent care for Ministers' consideration, with funding under the Healthy Balance Research Program.

Under the goals of women's economic equality, Council contributed to several initiatives, including sponsoring the Healthy Balance Research Program. This is a five year research program that looks as the effect of women's paid and unpaid work, including unpaid caregiving on their health and well-being. The impact of caregiving on women's economic well being is also of great interest.

Through the Healthy Balance Research Program, a report on the Tax/Transfer System and Dependent Care was commissioned and released to government and academic audiences. Taxation and Dependent Care became a source of information as well for an open letter from the council chair on the importance of extending maternity, parental and compassionate care leave benefits to those not eligible for employment insurance; e.g. self-employed women and those in precarious work situations. The letter was carried in several newspapers, including the Chronicle Herald.

A survey of how much and what kind of caregiving takes place in Nova Scotia and how it affects caregivers' health and well-being was begun in February under the auspices of the Healthy Balance Research Program. The researchers expect to learn what proportion of Nova Scotians provide care, to whom and with what intensity and duration. They also want to know how caregiving affects caregivers' health, and their work and family balance.

Core Function: Information and Education

Priority: Ensure public awareness of Council accomplishments and positions through communications plans and actions.

The Executive Director took part in the selection committee to the Lieutenant Governor's Women and Leadership Symposium, giving young women at the start of their careers a significant learning opportunity.

Council publication launches and public events garnered increased positive media coverage for the Advisory Council. The campaign school in particular generated coverage from as far away as Lethbridge, Alberta. It also included a relatively new media outlet, CBC's Country Canada channel, available through digital cable.

Council staff provided communications support to the Local Council of Women of Halifax to launch the Agnes Dennis Lecture with Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada as speaker for Women's History Month. Halifax print media covered the event with a profile of the Chief Justice. Her lecture on women in the Supreme Court of Canada, delivered on a Saturday night, drew an audience of about 300 people.

Council publicly marked commemorative dates to help keep issues in the public eye. Events planned for Women's History Month, the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women and International Women's Day all brought local media recognition to issues of great importance to women.

In particular, a partnership with the Transition House Association of Nova Scotia brought together the Premier, MLAs, and Council to launch the Purple Ribbon Campaign and marked THANS's 15th anniversary. All women members of the legislature took part, helping to focus attention on an important awareness and fund-raising effort. A panel discussion at Province House brought to public attention the progress that has been made in the area of violence against women in the last 15 years.

Priority: Increase awareness among young women of the career, family and health issues that affect them through development and dissemination of a young women's resource handbook, co-ordinated with the Council's overall communications plan.

Council worked with community partners the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre, Hypatia Society, IWK Health Centre, Phoenix House and teenaged girls to develop a Guide for Girls. The publication was well received in focus tests and will be disseminated during 2005-2006 through public libraries, and organizations that serve teens.

Priority: Orientation and media relations training of new Council members, strengthened internal communications with Council members.

A pilot project to support Council members in public speaking began this year. Council members took part in a one-day session on being an ambassador for your organization with internationally certified public speaking trainer Margaret Hope. The program was delivered in conjunction with the campaign school and other training Ms. Hope was providing in Nova Scotia, making her session more cost-effective for council. In addition to the training council members received, the council is developing speeches which members can use in presentations in their own communities. During the coming year, council members will track their public speaking sessions.

Priority: Informational and communications support as required by Minister and Council Chair

Ongoing briefing and communications services were provided.

Core Function: Community Liaison and Rural Outreach
Priority: Dissemination of a handbook for women candidates, development of a women's campaign school.

In May 2004, Council launched *Votes for Women*, a book to help women interested in politics to get involved. It contains information from experienced advisors on fundraising, campaigning and dealing with the media.

The highlight of the year was the non-partisan campaign school for women held Nov. 19-21. Council worked with Mount Saint Vincent University to provide a two and a half-day learning institute for women interested in running for elected office. The 30 women who took part reported very high satisfaction with the event, and several are highly likely to run in an upcoming campaign.

In addition to these activities, Council joined with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities and the YWCA in a project to promote women's participation in municipal decision-making in Nova Scotia. The Women in Local Government project began with a review of existing literature on a topic much researched in other jurisdictions and at other levels of government. Data on the experiences of Nova Scotia women and municipalitites will be added, and a final report to the UNSM will take place in 2005-2006.

Priority: In partnership with the Office of Aboriginal Affairs and the NS Native Women's Association, coordinate and host a General Assembly of First Nations Women as input to the Federal/Provincial/Territorial/Aboriginal forum through the F/P/T Status of Women Ministers' forum.

Work toward this event continues through the F/P/T Forum of Status of Women Ministers, with a national forum planned for winter 2006.

Priority: Update the findings of the Task Force on the Economic Integration of Women With Disabilities (1993).

Initital planning for the activity was undertaken, with the Amherst field office in the lead. It is expected that regional meetings for women with disabilities will take place throughout 2006.

Priority: Inclusion of women in social and economic development

Inclusion of women is a critical part of the work of the Advisory Council. It is ensured through staff and council participation in the Sustainable Communities Initiative, Rural Women and Pensions Project, Women's CED Network, and Techsploration. Work on sustainable community initiatives in two SCI field team areas (Bras d'Or Lakes and Annapolis-Fundy) continue to integrate the concerns of women.

An outstanding example of this work was the doubling this year of the Techsploration program to 16 schools and more than 100 students.

The Advisory Council's fieldworker in Amherst worked with the Cumberland African Nova Scotian Association and Eastlink Television to create a 30-minute documentary celebrating the lives of African Nova Scotian women in Cumberland County which premiered in Amherst on February 15th. The video will give future generations the opportunity to hear first-hand accounts of the struggles and the joys of these women. The documentary is available in schools and has aired several times on Eastlink Television across Nova Scotia.

Two workshops were held with service providers and police enforcement personnel examining issues relating to the exploitation of women through technology with a primary focus on the internet and the use of web-cams.

Financial Results

Estimated Budget Expenditures		
	Budget 2004-2005	Actual 2004-2005
	$Thousands	$Thousands
Net Program Expenses	$756.0	$738.7
Salaries and Benefits	$495.3	$456.2
Funded Staff (FTEs)	7.8	6.9[1]

[1]FTEs were lowered through vacancies arising from retirements and maternity leave.

Performance Measures 2004-2005
Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Council Members' Self-Rating of Participation in Community

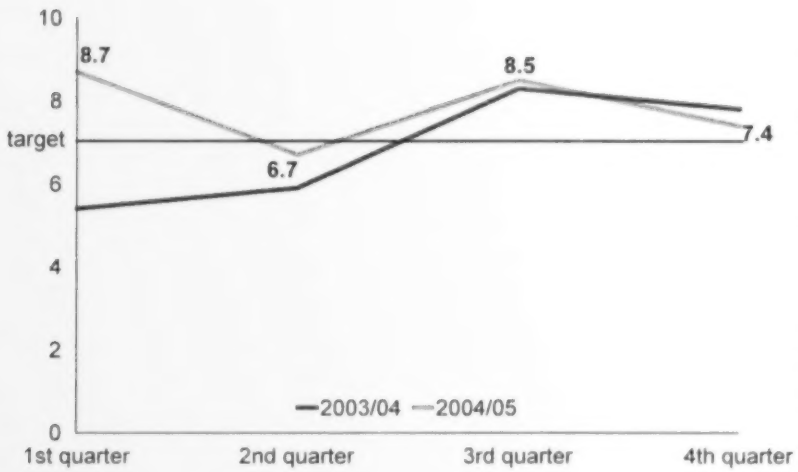
The sustained effectiveness of the Advisory Council is a desirable outcome which is achieved by supporting members' active engagement in their communities to enable them to bring forward the concerns of women to relevant policy audiences.

What does the measure tell us?

The Council members' self-rating of participation in the community is a quarterly administered self-rating which ranges from 1 (was not able to do any Council-related work) to 10 (did Council-related work at least once a week). Scores are averaged across all Council members for each quarter of the fiscal year. Higher scores are indicative of a more active, vibrant Council with members who are dedicating a significant amount of personal time to the concerns of women in the province and who know the needs of the women they are serving.

Where are we now?

Average Advisory Council Member Self-Ratings, 2003-2005



Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Council member self-ratings in 2004-2005 were higher than their 2003-2004 ratings in three out of the four quarters of the fiscal year. In all but the 2nd quarter, average self-ratings were above the target rating of 7.0. Three new members joined the Advisory Council at the beginning of June, 2004. Council members who were present during the first quarter of the fiscal year were very experienced and comfortable with their roles and subsequently had particularly high self-ratings for that quarter (on average, 8.7 out of 10). As might be expected, with the addition of new Council members in the second quarter, average self-ratings lowered somewhat to an average of 6.7 but increased to above target level by the third and fourth quarters as new members gained experience, knowledge, and ease with their roles.

Where do we want to be?

Average Council member self-ratings met or surpassed our target for 2004-2005 in three out of the four quarters of the 2004-2005 fiscal year. It is expected that we will continue to meet or exceed our target of 7 out of 10 for the coming fiscal years.

Council Members' Satisfaction with Orientation

The sustained effectiveness of the Advisory Council is a desirable outcome which is achieved by supporting members' active engagement in their communities to enable them to bring forward the concerns of women to relevant policy audiences. One way which the Advisory Council can enhance the effectiveness of its members is by providing them with adequate orientation and training to increase their understanding of women's issues in Nova Scotia and their role as Council members. Council members are also provided with media training to enhance their capacity for public speaking and deal effectively with media interviews.

What does the measure tell us?

The Council members' satisfaction with their orientation is assessed with a short evaluation form. New Council members who have completed their orientation and media training are asked to evaluate:
a) whether they now have a better understanding of the Advisory Council and the role of its members?
b) whether they now have a better understanding of women's issues in Nova Scotia? and
c) their overall satisfaction with the orientation they received (low, moderate, or high).

Where are we now?

Three new members joined the Advisory Council in June of 2004. New members unanimously agreed that they had a better understanding of the Advisory Council and the role of its members as well as of women's issues in Nova Scotia after receiving their orientation training. New members also unanimously rated their overall satisfaction with the orientation as **high**.

Where do we want to be?

The Advisory Council will be taking on new members (as well as making some re-appointments of previous members) in October 2005. Using previous experience and expert media advice, the Advisory Council will ensure that Council orientation and media training is made available for all new members. In this way, it is expected that new members' satisfaction with their orientation will consistently remain high.

Ministerial Satisfaction with the Work of the Advisory Council

In 2004-2005, the Advisory Council on the Status of Women continued to provide advice to the Minister on the concerns and priorities of women in Nova Scotia. By maintaining high-quality policy-based research programs as well as quality informational and communications support, ministerial satisfaction with the work of the Advisory Council remained high in 2004-2005 as it has been in previous years.

Ministerial satisfaction with the work of the Advisory Council was **high** for 2004-2005.

Council Website Visits

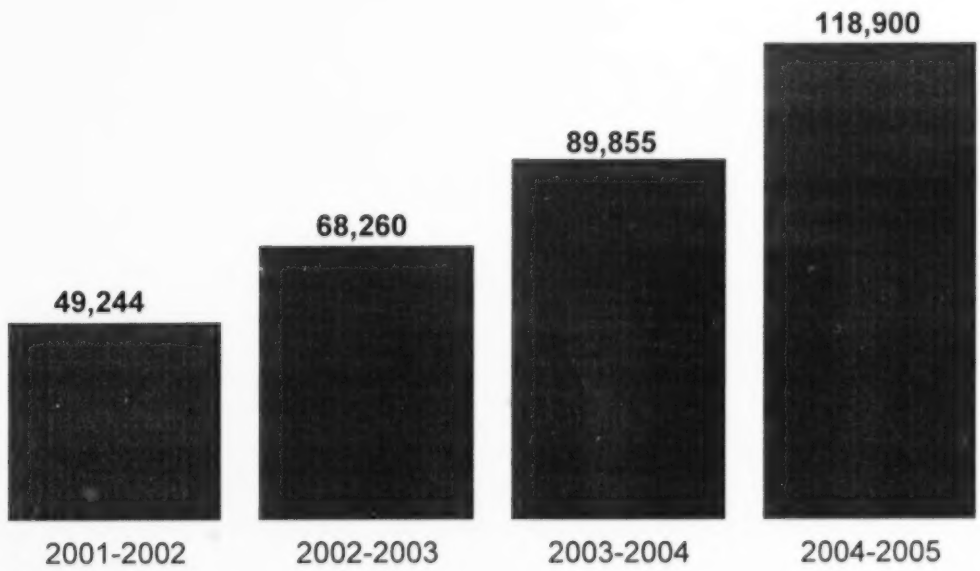
Information and education is another of the Advisory Council's three core business areas. A desired outcome within this area is the public's awareness of Council initiatives and work.

What does the measure tell us?

Tracking the Council's website utilization gives us an idea of the popularity of the Council's work, including its briefs, statistical publications and other informational documents, which the Council is increasingly making available to the public in electronic format. Consistently high Council website usage indicates a consistently strong public interest in and demand for the Council's work.

Where are we now?

Advisory Council Web-Site Usage (pageviews)
2001-02 to 2004-2005



Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

In 2004-2005, the Advisory Council's website had 118,900 visits, an increase of more than 32% over the 2003-2004 fiscal year. Though some fluctuations were evident in the monthly number of website visits, the overall fiscal year, as in past years, continued to

show an upward trend. For example, the average monthly number of website visits for the first quarter of the 2004-2005 fiscal year was 8,906 and for the last quarter was 10,319.

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Our original target for this measure was to exceed 50,000 website visits by 2004-2005. As we surpassed this target in both the 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 fiscal years, we, last year, revised our target for 2004-2005 to 70,000 website visits. Once again we have surpassed our target by a significant margin (i.e., 48,900 page views above the target). Given this steady increase, our target for future years should increase again, this time to 100,000 page views. We do not anticipate having any difficulty attaining this goal. The Advisory Council Is currently in the process of updating its website to better meet the needs of its patrons. In light of these changes, it is our hope that the use of the Advisory Council's website will continue to increase.

Information and Referral Requests

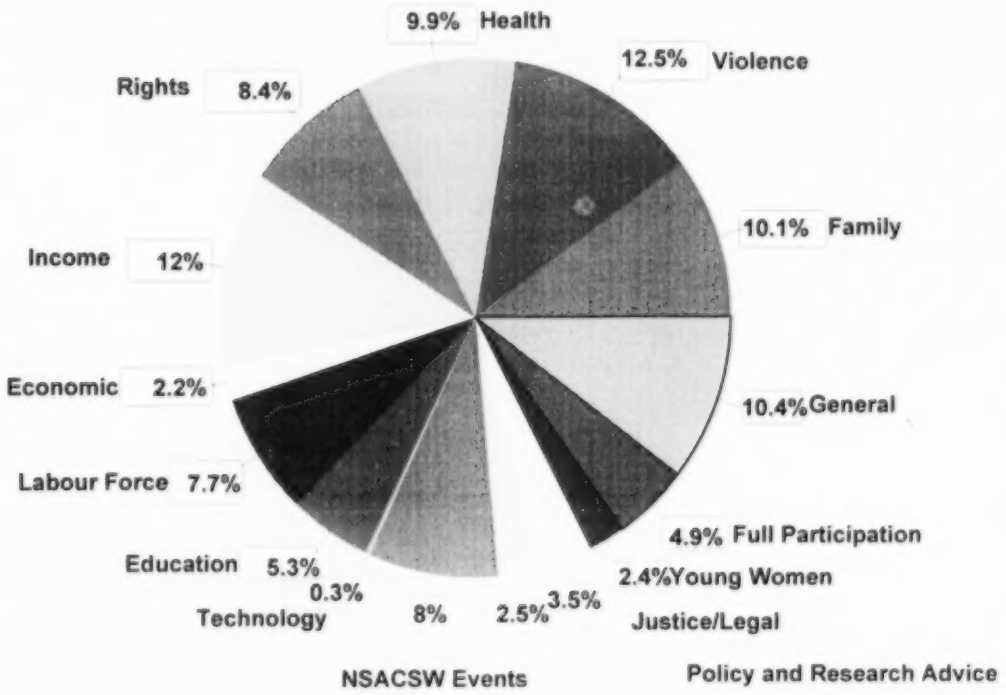
Another desired outcome within the core business area of information and education is the public's awareness of Council's services.

What does the measure tell us?

Tracking and analysis of the information and referral requests made to Council staff by the public gives us a sense of the public's level of awareness of the information and referral services that the Advisory Council provides. Because staff keep track of the topic areas of these requests, we can also get a sense of the types and variety of issues that are of concern to the women we serve. The statistics collected also allow us to determine who is making the most use of Advisory Council services, what types of requests people are making, the types of actions taken by staff to address the requests and staff satisfaction with the action provided.

Where are we now?

Subject Area of Requests made to Advisory Council, 2004-05



In 2004-2005, 1,127 persons made a total of 1,162 requests for information to Advisory Council staff with 40% directed to the Community Liaison and Rural Outreach staff. The requests made resulted in 1,406 actions taken by staff. The subject area of requests was varied but requests related to violence (12.5%) and income/income support (12%) were the most frequent while family, health and well-being and general (each around 10%) were also popular (see figure immediately above). Staff were **satisfied** with the actions they took in response to public requests 90% of the time, **somewhat satisfied** 9% of the time, and **not satisfied** only 1% of the time.

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Our 2004-2005 target for this measure was 2000 requests for information and referral from the public. For the past three years, the number of requests for information and referral have been lower than in the past. The decline in the number of requests may have been influenced by the closure of two of the Advisory Council's field offices in recent years as well as the public's increasing reliance on the Internet and the Council's website to obtain information.

Media Coverage of Council's Work

Another desired outcome within the core business area of information and education is the print media's coverage of Council initiatives, events, and work in general.

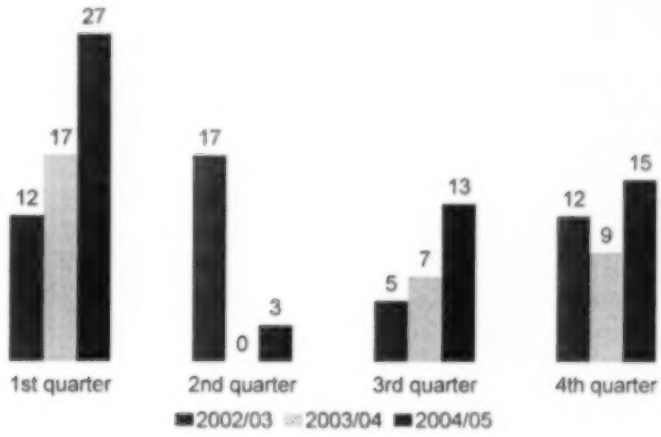
What does the measure tell us?

Tracking the print media's coverage of the Council's work provides us with a sense of the Council's public image. A consistently strong interest in the Council's work on the part of the media is consistent with a stronger public image and increased public recognition of the Council's work and initiatives.

Where are we now?

Print Media Coverage of Council's Work
2002-2003 to 2004-2005

In 2004-2005 there were a total of 58 print media stories published that related to the work of the Advisory Council, up from 33 media stories in 2003-2004 and 46 stories in 2002-2003. Although there was substantial variation in the number of media stories published (ranging from 27 stories in the first quarter to only 3 stories in the second quarter), there was an average of close to 5 print media stories per month in 2004-2005.



Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Our current target for this measure is a minimum of one print story per month. We do not anticipate having any difficulty meeting this target.

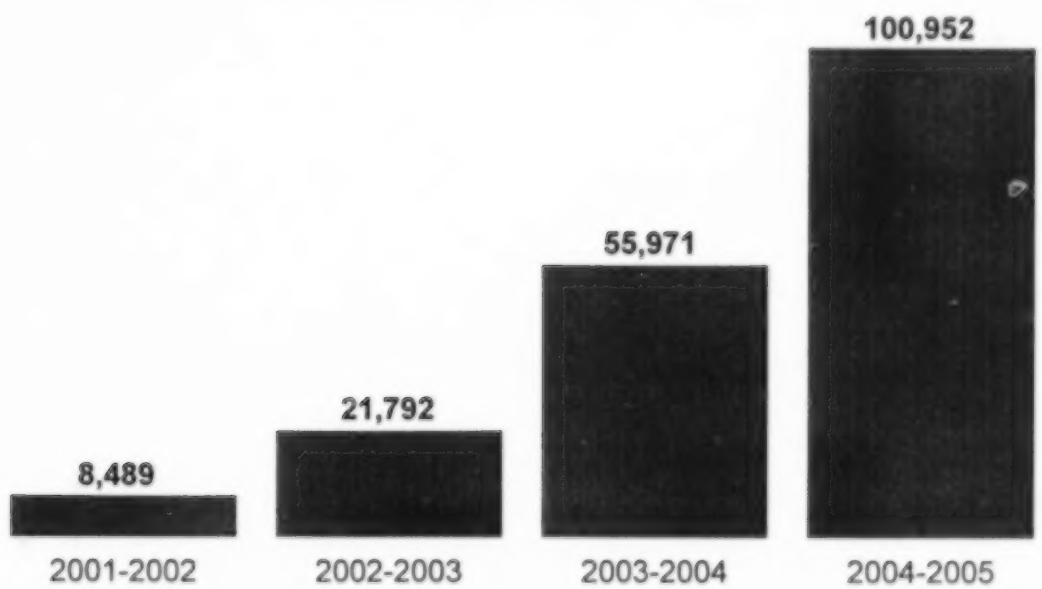
Public Support for and Satisfaction with Advisory Council Publications

What does the measure tell us?

Tracking the public's use of Council publications, both printed copy and electronic format, gives us an idea of the popularity of the Council's published work, including its briefs, statistical publications and other informational documents. Consistently high demand for Council publications indicates the public's interest in and satisfaction with the published work of the Council, analogous to the media's use of circulation figures. Tracking the distribution by publication allows us to know how popular particular publications are.

Where are we now?

Advisory Council Publications (PDF files) Downloaded from Web-Site, 2001-2002 to 2004-2005



Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

As can be seen in the figure immediately above, the number of publications downloaded from the Advisory Council's website continues to increase. In total, 100,952 publications (PDF files) were downloaded from the Council's website in 2004-2005.

This is close to 12 times more publications than were downloaded in 2001-2002 and 1.8 times more than were downloaded in the 2003-2004 fiscal year. Additionally, another 11,785 hard copies of publications were distributed to meet the requests of the public in 2004-2005.

Of the publications downloaded from the Advisory Council's website in 2004-2005, 60,198 (60%) were information/education publications such as *Making Changes*, *Votes for Women*, and *And They Lived Happily Ever After*. By far, the Council's most popular publication was *Making Changes: A Book for Women in Abusive Relationships* (3rd edition, revised), with 33,583 PDF copies downloaded and another 4,851 paper copies distributed in 2004-2005.

Consistently high demand was also evident for the Council's policy and research publications such as its statistical publications *Money Matters*, *Family Matters*, *Family Violence & Personal Safety*, *Learners & Teachers*, and *Women's Paid and Unpaid Work* as well as its various briefs, backgrounders and reports. In 2004-2005, 40% of all publications downloaded from the Advisory Council website were policy and research publications. In all 40,754 copies of policy and research publications were downloaded.

Where do we want to go/be in the future?

The importance of the Council's website in improving the public's access to council information can hardly be over-stated. The number of policy/research as well as informational/educational publications downloaded, for instance, far exceeds the number the Council could typically afford to make available in hard copy. Thus our information and outreach capacity is enhanced in a highly cost-effective manner.

Given the higher than estimated demand for Council publications in the last number of years, we have twice increased our target for this measure - from 5,000 to 25,000 downloads in 2002-2003 and from 25,000 to 50,000 downloads in 2003-2004. This year, the number of Council publications downloaded and/or requested, once again, far exceeded our target of 50,000. Given that the Advisory Council had close to twice this many publications downloaded/requested in 2004-2005, targets for coming years should be changed to 100,000 requests for/downloads of Council publications.

Council Publications
2004-2005

Women and the Minimum Wage in Nova Scotia
A brief on gender issues and the minimum wage in Nova Scotia submitted to the Department of Environment and Labour. February 2005

Immigrant Women and a Framework for Immigration to Nova Scotia
A brief prepared jointly by the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women and the Gender/Immigrant Women Research Domain, Atlantic Metropolis Atlantique in response to *A Framework for Immigration: A Discussion Paper*, Province of Nova Scotia, 2004. October 15, 2004

Building Transitions to Good Jobs for Low-Income Women
July 7, 2004

Women's Paid and Unpaid Work: Women in Nova Scotia, Part 5 of a Statistical Series. June 14, 2004

In Her Own Name: Public Pensions, Advancing Equality for Rural Women: Recommendations for Public Retirement Pension Policy Development and Change. by Rusty Neal. An independent research publication, funded by Status of Women Canada. The Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women was one of five supporting groups on the project. May 31, 2004

Votes for Women - a Political Guidebook
Des votes pour les femmes - Une guide politique. May 17, 2004

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